



Communication strategies of competition authorities as a tool for agency effectiveness

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Outline

UNCTAD paper TD/B/C.I/CLP/28

- Competition Advocacy
- Role of the media in advocacy
- UNCTAD survey on the use of media communication strategies for competition advocacy
- Questions for the Experts

Competition advocacy

- Advocacy means the promotion of competition principles in policy discussions and regulatory processes
- For a Competition Authority (CA) advocacy entails:
 - (i) promoting a competitive environment among government entities ;
 - (ii) increasing public awareness of the benefits of competition to society as a whole and how policy can promote and protect it (consumers and firms)

Competition advocacy

- Some examples of advocacy activities:
 - (i) testimonies/written submissions to legislature, ministries, courts, sector regulators, or municipalities;
 - (ii) speeches to professional associations/academia;
 - (iii) conferences,
 - (iv) Publication of articles in newspapers;
 - or (v) Making an articulated strategy for the media

Competition advocacy

Rationale for the paper

- In the context of limited experience and resources, advocacy is a natural start for young agencies: educate before enforcing
 - > as you gradually learn how to enforce
- For C.A.s, use of media communication strategies is a tool to be heard and exercise influence on decision makers (via pressure from public opinion)

Role of media in advocacy

a. Raising awareness:

- Explain CA's role: activities and benefits of addressing anti-competitive behaviour in simple language
- Fairness: provide ways to report violations and seeking redress
- Galvanizes political support: Stories on harm to people's livelihoods (e.g. from consumer groups, trade unions)

Role of media in advocacy

b. Influence on behaviour of the business community:

- A priori understanding of competition law
- Awareness of violations categories and leniency schemes
- Encourages preventive measures
 - In theory compliance rates as well as participation in leniency schemes should improve

Role of media in advocacy

c. Influences policy makers

- Enhances democratic debates on policy
- Amplifies unheard voices by policy makers
- Obstacles limiting competition advocacy

impact:

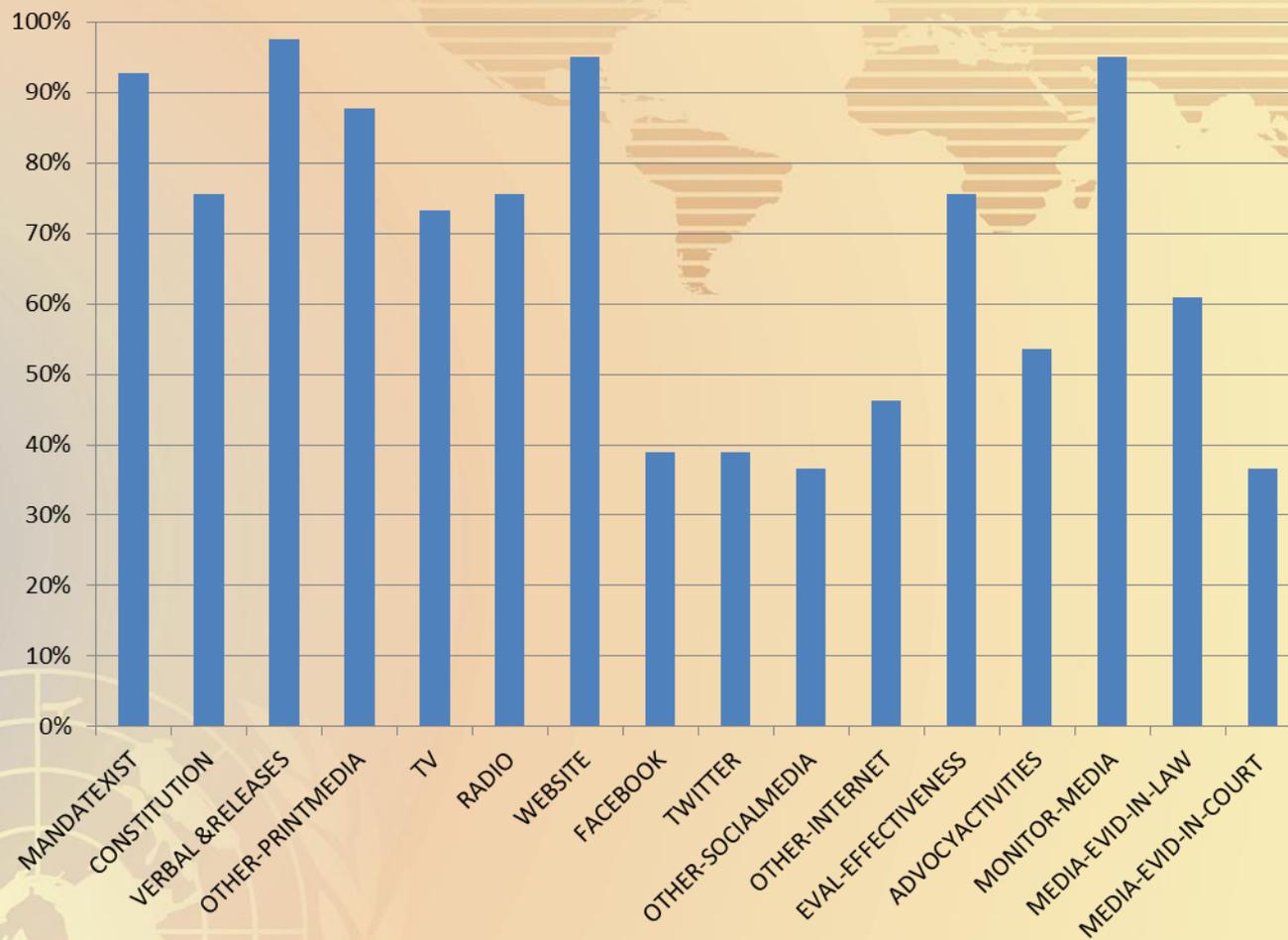
- (i) competing state objectives (income, investment, social standards, politics)
- (ii) limited press freedom

UNCTAD Survey: use media for competition advocacy



The aim of the survey was to review the practices of CA around the world in media advocacy and how they contribute to agency effectiveness

Replies: 43 agencies



UNCTAD Survey: use of media strategies



New media

- Internet media allow a two-way communication with the public on hot issues. Both Developed and Developing Countries use them.
 - Younger CA are enthusiastic because of low cost.
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UNCTAD Survey: use of media strategies

Evaluation of impact

- Measuring the impact of media advocacy is difficult: some CAs had evaluation methodologies, others not

- (i) Measuring the number of complaints

- iii) Periodic perception surveys

- (iv) Record stakeholders feed-back in e-media

- (v) One CA used sophisticated econometric methods to calculate price difference (existence vs absence of regulation)

conclusion

Media communication strategies for competition advocacy constitute a powerful tool for C.A.s to have strategic impact:

- Cost-effectiveness (outreach)
- Deterrence potential, ex-ante
- Mobilize political support (pro-competition via pressure on decision makers)
 - C.A.s empowered: independance & resources
- Use of fourth power, mainstreams competition culture in society through democratic participation in law enforcement and policy

Questions for discussion by the experts

1. How should young competition agencies develop their media advocacy strategies?
2. What lessons can be learned from countries with long established competition cultures?
3. What kind of assistance is needed for capacity building and the best modalities for international cooperation in media advocacy?
4. Where media freedom is limited, how could competition advocacy be handled?



Thank you

[http://unctad.org/en/Pages/DITC/Competition
Law/Competition-Law-and-Policy.aspx](http://unctad.org/en/Pages/DITC/CompetitionLaw/Competition-Law-and-Policy.aspx)

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